



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District

Conservation, Education and Stewardship

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For Immediate Release

February 2, 2021

Black Fork Ditch Petition

MANSFIELD, OH - Community members in Shelby privately planned and organized cleaning a portion of the Black Fork River.

Phase 1 cleaned the section of the river from State Route 13 to State Street and Phase 2 is cleaning the river from State Street to Mickey Road. The combined total cost for the cleaning projects is approximately \$367,000.

Both phases of the Black Fork River clean-up project are nearing completion. These two projects were beneficial in cleaning and clearing the river, but more work is necessary to help with continuing efforts to keep the river flowing.

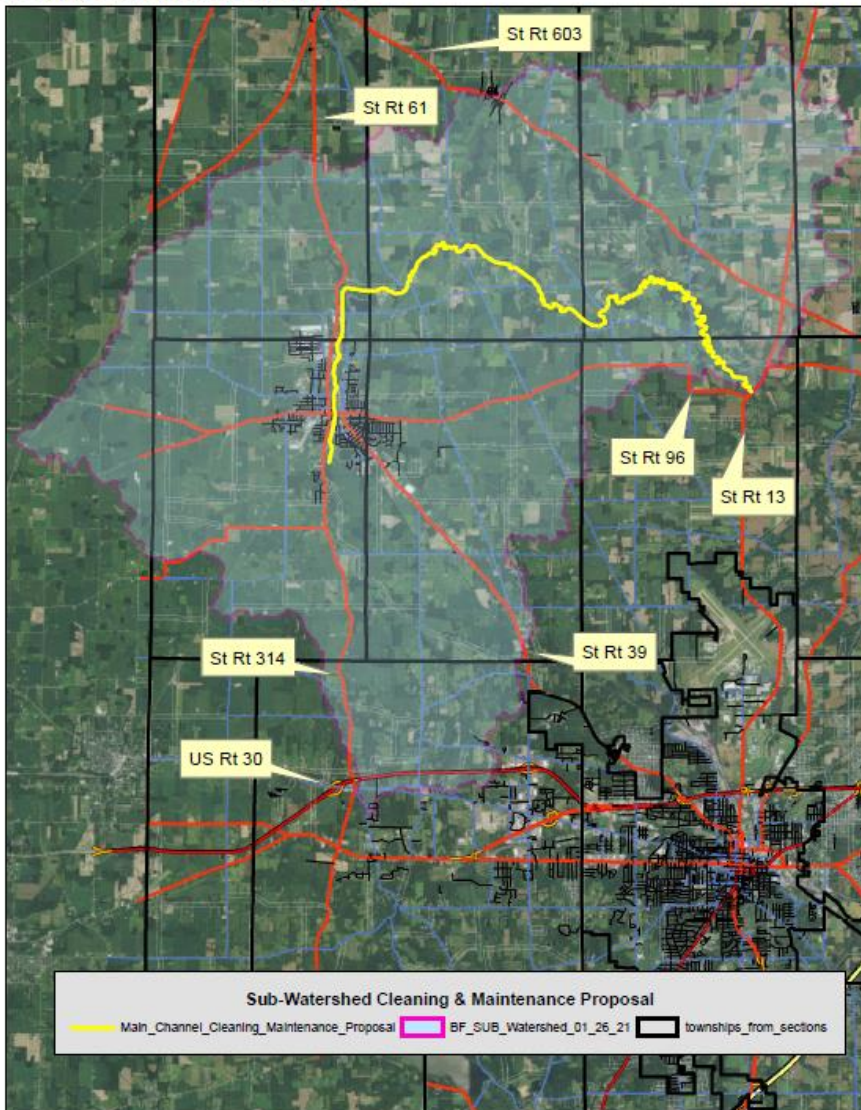
To help with the cleaning efforts and maintain the Black Fork River for years to come, the City of Shelby and rural community members will continue their efforts by filing a Joint Ditch Petition with the Richland County and Crawford County Commissioners in mid-February. The Joint Ditch Petition will request the Black Fork River be cleaned and maintained from Mickey Road to State Route 13. The City of Shelby will be petitioning for the area of the river inside of the city corporation limits, while rural community members will be petitioning for the remainder of the river. The total petitioned area of the river is approximately 18 miles.

Black Fork River Ditch Petition Project

- **A Joint Ditch Petition is a legal process under Ohio Revised Code 6133 that is** requested by a petitioner(s) for the cleaning and the annual maintenance of a waterway (ditch, tributary, stream, river) through an assessment process to all parcel owners within the watershed area. The petition is filed with the County Commissioners of both counties. There are approximately 10,500 parcels in the petitioned watershed area, involving approximately 70,000 acres.
- **The petition will request** the river be cleaned and maintained annually by removing felled trees, leaning trees, log jams, and debris piles. The clearing of the obstructions will allow for better drainage and reduce risk of flooding. It also improves safety by removing rotting logs and trash, allowing for recreational use of the water including boating, fishing, birding, wildlife watching and enjoying the natural views.
- **For** more information on the joint ditch petition process, visit <https://richlandswcd.net/services/water/stormwater/ohio-drainage-laws>.
- **The Black Fork River begins near Mansfield/Ontario, goes through Shelby to Charles Mill Lake and joins the Rocky Fork River east of Lucas below Charles Mill. It also includes a small portion in Crawford County. To find out more about the Black Fork Watershed and the other seven watersheds in Richland county, visit** <https://richlandswcd.net/services/water/watersheds-of-richland-county>.

Richland & Crawford Counties
Entire Black Fork Sub-Watershed
Cleaning & Maintenance Proposal

Plymouth-Cass-Blooming Grove-Butler
Sharon-Jackson-Franklin
Springfield Townships



The Richland Soil and Water Conservation District develops, implements, and assists landowners, government agencies and our partners with a wide range of natural resource conservation programs.

Programs and assistance of the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status.

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